



# **HOUSTON FIRE DEPARTMENT**

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE**

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## **JOINT HIGH-RISE FIRE SIMULATION TRAINING ANNOUNCED**

The Houston Fire Department, Houston Building Owners and Management Association (BOMA) and Crescent Real Estate Equities announced today a joint effort dedicated to increased high-rise firefighter training for members of the Houston Fire Department.

Assistant Fire Chief Omero Longoria, BOMA representative Chuck Moore with Cushman & Wakefield and Bob Carlen Vice President of Property Management Greenway Plaza gave brief remarks about the cooperative effort to enhance training, benefiting not only the firefighters, but also the owners, managers and occupants of high-rise buildings in Houston.

Crescent Real Estate Equities also presented the fire department a check for training equipment, including several smoke machines and a "Rescue Randy".

"The building that hosts the simulation, participates in this process and receives invaluable interactive training with the fire personnel, as the fire fighters gain specific skills related to the host building," said Carlen. "The end result is a "win win" situation for both the building and the fire fighters in a unique training opportunity."

In 2003, the fire department initiated a new training program format for high-rise fire fighting in which Crescent Real Estate Equities hosted a series of fire simulations at their Greenway Plaza and Westlake Properties. In May of this year, BOMA joined this effort in order to provide a broader availability in key areas of the City.

The main purpose of the simulation is to create a real life situation that consists of a series of skill tests that are conducted on a normal building floor, under fire conditions. Building personnel execute designated building fire procedures in relationship to the activity of the fire department.

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## **JOINT HIGH-RISE FIRE TRAINING, Continued, Pg. 2**

According to Tammy Betancourt, Executive Vice President, Houston Building Owners and Managers Association, the ongoing excellent working relationship with HFD and public/private partnerships such as the High Rise Simulation Training Program continue to ensure that Houstonians working in commercial office buildings are well served by both the building owners and the Houston Fire Department

"Of utmost concern to owners and managers of office buildings is the safety and security of their tenants," said Betancourt.

At the start of the simulation, the arriving fire units have to contend with normal situations that they would encounter in an actual high-rise fire. The firefighters enter the building and begin emergency fire operations which will include, lobby command, resource management, triage operations, with an array of communication methods as well as using a fire fighter accountability system. The fire floor would be flooded with theatrical smoke, to a zero visibility environment and all building fire alarm systems will be activated under fire conditions, including the recalling of the elevator system. These drills will start in September and media will be invited to the first drill.

According to Assistant Chief Longoria, who also oversees the HFD Training Academy, the greatest benefit of the training is the exchange of information conducted between the shifts at the fire stations.

"Each fire simulation is a progressive training process in which the fire fighters interact both on the scene and continue as discussion points at each fire station as the training progresses," said Longoria. "This makes the High-Rise Fire Simulation an invaluable resource for the fire fighting community."